

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 06123 101139Z

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2570

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 6123

FROM SUPPORT OFFICE

E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJECT: EXCHANGE SUPPORT FUND - KHMER REPUBLIC

REFS: (A) KUALA LUMPUR 1806 (B) PHNOM PENH 5261

1. AT THE REQUEST OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, USAID/KHMER REPUBLIC, A MEETING WAS ARRANGED ON APRIL 8 WITH THE MINISTER-COUNSELOR OF THE MALAYSIA EMBASSY IN BANGKOK. THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING WAS TO DISCUSS THE MISSING ESF TELEGRAPHIC KEYS, DOCUMENTS, ETC. THE MINISTER-COUNSELOR ASKED MR. ISMAIL AMBIA, MALAYSIAN CHARGE ASSIGNED TO PHNOM PENH, WHO IS PRESENTLY IN BANGKOK, TO ATTEND THE MEETING. MR. AMBIA STATED THAT THE TELEGRAPHIC KEYS AND OTHER ESF MATERIALS WHICH HE HAD BEEN SAFEGUARDING ARE PROBABLY MIXED WITH GOM SECRET DOCUMENTS THAT WERE FORWARDED TO KUALA LUMPUR WHEN HIS MISSION WAS HASTILY EVACUATED FROM PHNOM PENH. HE SAID THAT MR. LIM SIN YIEN, WHO WAS EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF HIS EMBASSY IN PHNOM PENH AT THE TIME OF THE EVACUATION, AND WHO HAD ACTUAL CUSTODY OF THE ESF MATERIALS, HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO FORWARD THEM TO BANGKOK. IT SEEMS THAT MR. LIM WAS UNABLE TO DO SO DUE TO THE CANCELLATION OF THE AIR CAMBODGE FLIGHT. APPARENTLY THE DOCUMENTS ARE IN A CLASSIFIED DIPLOMATIC POUCH WHICH ACCOMPANIED LIM AND AMBIA TO SINGAPORE AND THEN KUALA LUMPUR.

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 06123 101139Z

2. MR. AMBIA IS SENDING A CABLE TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN

AFFAIRS IN KUALA LUMPUR TO TRY TO LOCATE THE ESF MATERIALS AND FORWARD THEM TO THE MALAYSIA EMBASSY BANGKOK. UPON ARRIVAL HERE, AMBIA SUGGESTS THAT THEY BE TURNED OVER TO THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN BANGKOK FOR SAFEKEEPING.

3. EMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR IS REQUESTED TO APPRISE THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE FOREGOING AND ADVISE WHEN WE CAN EXPECT THE ESF MATERIALS TO ARRIVE IN BANGKOK.

4. MR. AMBIA INDICATED HIS INTENTION TO RECOMMEND AGAINST FURTHER MALAYSIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE ESF. HIS POSITION IS BASED ON THE FACT THAT THE SOURCE OF ESF-FINANCED IMPORTS IS NOT RESTRICTED TO DONOR COUNTRIES. ALSO HE IMPLIED THAT MAJOR DONORS, I.E., THE U.S. AND JAPAN, HAD APPLIED PRESSURE TACTICS. HE BELIEVES MALAYSIAN INTERESTS WOULD BE BETTER SERVED THROUGH BILATERAL ASSISTANCE. PLEASE TRY TO ASCERTAIN THE PREVAILING SENTIMENT IN KUALA LUMPUR REGARDING CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THE ESF.

5. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT AMBIA WAS ANNOYED AND CONCERNED THAT THE U.S. WAS "CHASING HIM" IN AN EFFORT TO LOCATE THE MISSING DOCUMENTS. HOWEVER, HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED, CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT THE FUNDS INVOLVED WERE USG AND GKR CONTRIBUTED, THERE HAVING BEEN NO OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS THUS FAR IN THIS CALENDAR YEAR. WHILE WE DO NOT OBJECT TO THE MALAYSIAN EMBASSY IN BANGKOK TURNING OVER THE DOCUMENTS TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN BANGKOK, WE DID NOT REQUEST THAT THIS ACTION BE TAKEN. AT THE LAST MEETING OF THE ESF WORKING GROUP IN PHNOM PENH, IT WAS CLEARLY THE INTENTION OF THE WORKING GROUP THAT THE MALAYSIAN CHARGE SHOULD DEPOSIT THE DOCUMENTS WITH HIS EMBASSY IN BANGKOK. THE DOCUMENTS WERE TO REMAIN THERE UNTIL A TEMPORARY MANAGER HAD BEEN APPOINTED FOR THE ESF AND THE FUND COULD BECOME OPERATIONAL AGAIN. A SEPARATE MESSAGE FOLLOWS ON THIS SUBJECT.

MASTERS

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